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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FLOODPROOFING, RUNOFF REDUCTION & WATERSHEDS FOCUS  
OF 7<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL FLOOD AWARENESS WEEK**

The Lake County Stormwater Management Commission is sponsoring its annual Flood Awareness Week, April 1-6, 2002. By County Board and SMC resolution, the seventh annual event will focus on safety and self-help tools to reduce flood damages and runoff on your own property. This year's activities include a floodproofing workshop for homeowners and business owners. The free workshop will be held on Saturday, April 6, 2002, 9 a.m. - 12 noon, at the Fremont Township community room, 22376 W. Erhart Rd., Mundelein.

The workshop will cover ways to protect your home, basement or business from flood damage through simple, self-help methods. A flood mitigation expert will give an overview of appropriate floodproofing techniques and costs for specific flooding problems. Homeowners are invited to bring photos and questions to ask.

Participants will also receive a floodproofing guide outlining the techniques covered in

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the workshop and tips on hiring contractors. The document is free and can be viewed at SMC's website at: [www.co.lake.il.us/smc/Fldprfngbroch3.pdf](http://www.co.lake.il.us/smc/Fldprfngbroch3.pdf).

SMC will also kick off on April 5<sup>th</sup> a website focusing on techniques, or Best Management Practices (BMPs), to reduce runoff at the homeowner level. Rain gardens, yard management and native vegetation will be some of the BMPs featured on the page along with links to other valuable websites and resources.

Also during the week, SMC's watershed signage program will continue with new watershed identification signs installed in the Sequoit Creek and Squaw Creek watersheds. The signage program is co-sponsored by the Lake County Division of Transportation.

Finally, the media is invited to a rain gage demonstration. The new rain gage in Round Lake Park is the 11<sup>TH</sup> in SMC's local government cost-share gage network. Data gathered hourly by the rain gage is downloaded to SMC's website where the public can view the data. Data is particularly useful to site designers and engineers as well as municipalities for planning purposes.

"We know that flooding can happen any time of the year but dedicating a week in the spring calls attention to Lake County's potential for flooding and the challenge of homeowners and municipalities to reduce damages. The workshop and new website are particularly helpful in giving homeowners and business owners cost-effective tools to help them selves ," said Ward Miller, SMC executive director.

For more information on the workshop or any other activities, please call (847) 918-5260.

**LAKE COUNTY FLOOD FACTS:**

- Since 1982, Lake County has been declared a Presidential declared disaster area 3 times and State disaster area 6 times.
- Flooding is a year-round occurrence. The floods of 1986 were in September; the floods of 1996 were in July.
- Average yearly flood damages in Lake County portion of the Des Plaines Watershed alone amount to over \$9 million.

**TIPS FOR HOMEOWNERS:**

- Your homeowners insurance does not cover flooding. Check with your agent on federal flood insurance.
- Check FEMA's flood insurance rate maps to see where you are in relation to the floodplain. Your village or city hall should have the maps for viewing.
- Clear the storm sewer grates on the street in front of your home. Often, clogged grates are responsible for street and yard flooding.
- Direct your gutter downspouts away from foundations and into grassy areas. Vegetated ground can soak up more runoff.
- Something as simple as elevating utilities in your basement or garage can reduce flood damage costs.